

REMARKS

Status of the Application

Claims 1-12, 14 and 16-21 are pending in the application and have been examined.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-12, 14 and 16-21 --- 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-12, 14 and 16-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,079,443 to Wada ("Wada") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,593,814 to Donig ("Donig"). Applicant traverses this rejection.

Addressing claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the references as attempted by the Examiner since combining the references would render the voltage comparator of Wada unsuitable for its intended purpose. Transistors Q21 to Q24 constitute a high gain differential amplifier (column 3, lines 50-55). The operation of the differential amplifier depends on current source I20 causing currents I21 and I22 to flow in the circuit. See Fig. 2 of Wada reproduced below.

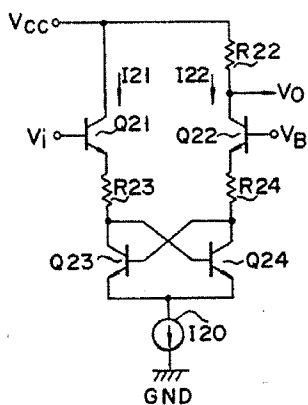


FIG. 2

If, as attempted by the Examiner, the voltage controller of Donig is substituted for the current source I20 of Wada, currents I21 and I22 cannot be maintained, and the circuit of Wada will not operate as intended. Thus, the current source I20 is essential for the proper operation of the differential amplifier circuit in the voltage comparator of Wada. Therefore, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace the current source I20 of Wada with the voltage controller of Donig, even if these elements were known in the prior art, since the combination would render the voltage comparator of Wada unsuitable for its intended purpose.

Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the attempted combination of Wada and Donig. Claims 2-10, 12, 14 and 16-19 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependence from claim 1. Claim 11, 20 and 21 contain features similar to the features recited in claim 1 and are therefore patentable for similar reasons.

Conclusion

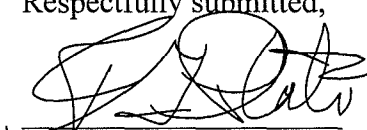
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln. No.: 10/542,576

Attorney Docket No.: Q89211

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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